

**Department of Justice**  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Northern District of Ohio

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, November 15, 2016

**Fairview Park man charged with making threats against the President-Elect**

A Fairview Park man was charged in federal court for making threats against President-Elect Donald Trump, said U.S. Attorney Carole S. Rendon and Craig Wisniewski, Special Agent in Charge of the Secret Service's Cleveland office.

Zachary Benson, 24, posted threats on his Twitter account around 1 a.m. on November 9, including: "My life goal is to assassinate Trump. Don't care if I serve infinite sentences. That man deserves to deacease existing," according to an affidavit filed in the case.

Benson later admitted to making the threats after watching election returns. He said he had no intentions related to the posts and was frustrated about the President-Elect's policies, according to the affidavit.

If convicted, the defendant's sentence will be determined by the court after review of factors unique to this case, including the defendant's prior criminal record, if any, the defendant's role in the offense and the characteristics of the violation. In all cases the sentence will not exceed the statutory maximum and in most cases it will be less than the maximum.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Karrie Howard following an investigation by the U.S. Secret Service.

A charge is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.